

Pentagon Memorial Competition Stage One Board Text

Entry # 2248

Pentagon New Day Memorial

Across the country people have naturally felt compelled to respond in various ways to commemorate the tragic events of 9/11. However profoundly sad and fearful the world became, a wonderful expression of solidarity and support emerged from within all of us. We have witnessed human nature in its finest hour as we joined together, united in expressing our love and respect for one another. It is this wonderful act of human expression that led us to our concept for the Pentagon Memorial.

Experience

Interactive: We believe that the memorial should be a place where people not only come to visit, but come to find comfort through interaction with one another and with the monument itself. It is the people who will ultimately fuel this memorial. Only with people will the true essence of this memorial be brought to life.

Expressive: The memorial is in our nation's capital, the home of our constitution in which freedom of speech was declared. What location could be more fitting for a place of self-expression and creativity? People from Washington, D.C., the United States and the entire world will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences, pay their respects and offer words of compassion, wisdom and support.

Unifying: There is no purer form of communication than that of touch. The simple act of touching the monument to inscribe a thought will create a unifying environment of great spirit and inspiration.

Liberation: Visitors will be guided by their own imaginations, while many will naturally feel compelled to create a personal message. Others will find it rewarding to simply absorb the displays of compassion. Through participation, this memorial will build a strong sense of community.

Historical: We feel the memorial should not be a static display, but an ever-changing one. Light will illuminate from behind the glass like morning rays of sun that mark the start of a new day. For this reason, each day should mark a new beginning for the memorial. The expression of one day will slowly fade through the night. This way, the hundreds of visitors who arrive each new day will have the chance to create a totally unique display.

A New Day

The idea that 'every day is a new day' is symbolic on two levels. First, the plane crash on the Pentagon was part of what became known as "the day that changed the world." This memorial is our response to the power of one day. What an amazing history this monument will tell over time as we look back to the messages created from one day, to one year, to decades from now. Secondly, 'every day is a new day' reflects hope and the healing process of 'taking one day at a time,' as a positive stepping stone to a better future.

The monument is constructed from 184 glass monolithic elements. They are distributed on a footprint 370" long and 20" wide reminiscent of the Pentagon's destroyed wall. The monoliths stand on a "floating" island of granite in a reflective pool, which also serves as barrier between the monument's grounds and the Pentagon security zone.

The configuration of monoliths in the plan has been designed so that they support one another by creating a strong and unified structure. The monoliths stand back to back and allow for space in between so that cool air can be drawn from below. This will allow condensation to accumulate on the lower portion of the monoliths and create visual layering effects like veils that optically disappear towards the sky. The veil is a daily rejuvenating "tabula rasa," (blank page) that allows for a variety of inscriptions. A visitor simply touches the surface of the glass to leave an impression.

To ensure a continuous "tabula rasa" condensation it has been supplemented with evaporation that will come from the reflective pool through small (1") gaps between walking surfaces and the monoliths. During winter months the temperature differential is reversed. The mechanism of temperature adjustment and evaporation is envisioned as part of the enhanced local eco-system where thermal masses and water retention would facilitate a self-sustaining process to support the monument.

About half way up each monolith are the names of the victims from the September 11th Pentagon attack permanently etched onto the surface of the glass.